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## SOCIALISM

Socialism is variously defined. Hyndman, an English socialist, calls it "an endeavor to substitute for the anarchical struggle or fight for existence, an organized co-operation for existence." Bradlaugh says: "Socialism denies individual private property and affirms that Society, organized as the State, should own all wealth, direct all labor and compel the equal distribution of all produce." John Stuart Mill says: "Socialism is any system which requires that the land and the instruments of production should be the property not of individuals but of communities, or associations, or of the Government." Proudhon calls it: "Every aspiration towards the amelioration of society." Of the later writers Robert Flint (1895) says: "Socialism is any theory of social organization which sacrifices the legitimate liberties of individuals to the will or interests of the community." He further adds: "No definition of Socialism at once true and precise has ever been given, or ever will be given. For Socialism is essentially indefinite, indeterminate. It is a tendency and movement towards an extreme. It may be very great or very small; it may manifest itself in the most diverse social and historical connections; it may assume and has assumed a multitude of forms. It may show itself merely in slight interferences with the liberties of very small classes of individuals; or it may demand that no individual shall be allowed to be a capitalist or a proprietor, a drawer of interest or a taker of rent; or be entitled even to have a wife or children to himself. . . . Socialism is the exaggeration of the rights and claims of society just as Individualism is the exaggeration of the rights and claims of individuals. The latter system rests on excessive or exclusive faith in individual independence; the former system rests on excessive or exclusive faith in social authority. The truth lies between them, yet is larger than either. The true doctrine of society must include the truth while excluding the error both of Individualism and of Socialism."

The term Socialism is somewhat over sixty years old. It is

not yet determined whether it was created by Owen, a celebrated English Communist, by Pierre Leroux, the author of a system known as "Humanitarianism," or by Louis Reybaud, the latter being a severe critic of the doctrine. The doctrine itself, however, is older. The pre-Revolution theories of Rousseau, Meslin, Morelly, Mably, and Babeuf paved the way for the accepted Socialistic idea.

It is generally conceded that St. Simon, who died in 1825, and Fourier, who died in 1837, were the true founders of Socialism. These, with Louis Blanc, Proudhon, and other French thinkers, familiarized Europe with the doctrine, though for some time its activity was confined to France. It is interesting now to note, however, that notwithstanding the fiery unrest of the French character, as evidenced in 1789 and 1848, France is exceedingly moderate in her Socialistic tendencies.

The greatest strides in the exploitation of the doctrine have probably been made in Germany, and it has produced a very great impression upon the politics of the Empire as it exists to-day, although recent defeats of the Socialist party would seem to indicate that its importance as a political factor is on the wane. It is questionable whether the present leaders of Socialism in Germany represent the pure Socialistic idea. They are not so radical in their views as to property, labor, capital, profit, and interest, but they believe in the protectionism of paternal government, political reforms, fair rents, State aid, and State intervention. This school of thought has had here more skilful leaders and a better organization than elsewhere. Then too it has drawn from great thinkers such as Rodbertus, Winkelblech, Marx, Lassalle, Schäffle, and others, who have imparted to it an apparent scientific dress and regularity.

In London, of late years, Socialism has gathered some force, but it is questionable whether it will become a fixed factor there. In the United States the peculiar conditions of the country have produced great private concentration of wealth, and for years the popular sentiment has been growing along Socialistic lines.

Passing on to a consideration of the doctrinal divisions of Socialism we find that there are two: viz., Communism and

Collectivism. Communism teaches the complete merging of the individual in the society to which he belongs. There is no private ownership whatever. The implements and the results of work are owned in common and distribution is on a basis of perfect and unvarying equality.

It is an idea which has been represented in the United States, but where it has proved successful, industrially and economically, the membership has been small and the discipline has been strict. The Society of Shakers founded by Ann Lee is an illustration of a Communistic settlement which has flourished. Brook Farm, which suggested to Hawthorne a stage environment for his *Blithedale Romance*, was a failure. W. D. Howells treats of this phase of Socialism in his *A Traveller from Altruria* and makes the "traveller," Homos, give a very good idea of the conditions in Altruria in these words: "Each dwelt in the place assigned him, which was no better and no worse than any other; and, after he had given his three hours a day to the obligatory labors, he had a right to his share of food, light, heat, and raiment; the voluntary labors, to which he gave much time or little brought him no increase of those necessities but only credit and affection. . . . No man owed anything, but everyman had the right to anything that he could use; when he could not use it, his right lapsed. With the expropriation of the individual, the whole vast catalogue of crimes against property shrank to nothing."

Collectivism is the scientific adaptation of Communism. It prescribes the paternity and intervention of the State; public organization of the labor of all on the basis of collective ownership of all the working materials of social labor: viz., land, factories, machines, tools, etc., and distribution of the collective output of all kinds of manufacture in proportion to the value and amount of the work done by each worker.

Karl Marx is credited with being the founder of this particular and popular form of Socialism, and he has certainly imparted to it whatever scientific importance it may have. He exalts the importance of manual labor as the sole source of value, and would reward the purely intellectual results of the thinker and contriver simply in proportion to the time spent by him in

work useful to the community. Indeed, he conceives that the value of all work should be estimated according to the quality of socially necessary labor expended; or, in equivalent terms, according to the time which must be on the average occupied in the employment. Capital he views as the result of the production of labor and not as a factor in it. Accumulated property in the hands of capitalists is unearned, and properly belongs to the laborer, having been virtually wrenched from him by oppression and poor wages. He holds that where there is an increase of production and a corresponding accumulation of capital there will be a tendency greatly to the disadvantage, slavery, and misery of the operative classes.

St. Simon's idea is founded upon diversity of occupation and unequal division. He would have a directing authority who should assign to each his position and function, and remuneration should be by salary which should vary in accordance with the importance with which the authority might vest the position and function, and also in accordance with the merits of the person filling it. The constitution of the ruling body might be appointed by popular suffrage. The original authors conceived the rulers to be persons of genius and virtue, who were calculated to produce social cohesion by the force of mental superiority. Fourierism considered it quite consistent with the main object of its being that private property and the element of inheritance be acknowledged. It holds capital, as well as labor, to be an important element in the distribution of produce. The idea is that industries should be carried on by associations of about two thousand members. These should combine their labor on a district of about a square league in extent, and should be guided and governed by chiefs selected by themselves. In the scheme of distribution a certain portion is first assigned for the support of every member of the community whether capable or incapable of labor. Labor, capital, and talent determine the proportions in which the remainder of the produce is to be divided.

The capital of the community may be distributed in unequal shares among the different members and they, in this case, would receive proportional dividends. The proportion of pro-

duce due each person on the score of talent is estimated by the grade or rank which he or she fills in one or the other of the various groups of laborers in the community. The remuneration received must not necessarily be devoted to the common needs, and no other community of living is expected than that all the members of the association should live in the same pile of buildings. In speaking of Fourierism, Mill says, "This system, unlike Communism, does not, in theory at least, withdraw any of the motives to exertion which exist in the present state of society."

During the past twenty-five years, it must be conceded that the views of Henry George, which are fashioned very much after the school of Karl Marx, have had great weight in the development of Socialistic tendencies, particularly in the United States. They grew little by little in influence, until, at the time of his death, a few years ago, George was a positive force to be reckoned with. Now, however, it is doubtful whether his ideas are endorsed in their entirety to the extent that they then were.

He, too, apotheosizes labor. Land, he says, is the great source of production and the laborer is the great producer. The fruits of the laborer should go to him, and the only legitimate meaning of capital, he maintains, is that part of the earnings of labor properly withheld in order that it should return to the laborer in such mechanical devices as may assist his power and volume of production. The private ownership of land he condemns as being inimical to the rights and opportunities justly belonging to labor, as it causes a series of speculative values and reduces the power over this great source of wealth to a basis of gross inequality. He suggests that all taxation should be compressed into one single tax, and that this tax should comprehend, in any given case, the rental value of the land. He believes that this is preferable to taking the land summarily out of the hands of its owners and making it common property, or to placing upon the State the burden of purchasing it for this purpose. At the same time he makes it clear that he fully agrees with Herbert Spencer's theory that there is no such thing as private property in land.

Under George's idea, the holder of the title would be reduced to a qualified property in his land. He could live in his house, or he could operate his factory, but he would not be entitled to receive land profit, or rent. The State would be the real owner and could take his property from him at any time that he might default in the payment of the appointed tax. The argument is that the source of speculation being taken away from land: viz., its return as an investment,—its value as a commodity would be destroyed, and a gradual surrender of individual holdings, especially those that were unimproved, would result. Thus, in this indirect way, the State would gain possession and be able to parcel out the land in a fashion which would give opportunity and scope to labor.

The fatal defect in Socialism is that it entirely misconceives man and his relation to Society. The great fundamental human instincts are those of freedom and possession. The very essence of life, down to the minutest details of it, consists of a sense of freedom and a desire to use it to possess some object or trait. The regulation of these instincts is in proportion as the individual is endowed intellectually and morally. This endowment, in turn, is largely a product of environment. The instincts of possession and freedom are controlled primarily by the mind, and the mind responding to the moral instincts produces character. The process by which character is developed and emphasized in human action is individuality.

Social inequality is a natural and uncontrovertible principle, and whatever is done to advance social conditions must be done with this principle as an underlying motive. Individuality cannot be destroyed, and, as John Stuart Mill says, no social system can live without the controlling element of liberty in thought and action. The settlement of the whole question of social unrest lies in the development of the individual. Legislation is really important only when it represents a growth of popular sentiment which will find its expression in obedience and not in evasion. Laws must mean something more than political schemes or sporadic efforts to reform. They must emanate from a condition in which possession will be regarded not entirely

from a personal but also from a relative standpoint; in which men will be guided more by a sense of responsibility and brotherhood to each other; in which honor, integrity, and justice will be looked upon as essential features in the battle of life; in which speculation will be eliminated from the creation of values, and these will be fixed in accordance with true economic rules; in which every man will be encouraged to do his best and to bring out to the greatest degree the capacity that is in him.

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